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STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCB, L/ACV, IO/S  
SECDEF FOR OSD/ISP  
JOINT STAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC  
COMMERCE FOR BIS (GOLDMAN)  
NSC FOR DICASAGRANDE  
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SUBJECT: CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC): STATUS OF OPCW  
WORKSHOP IN ROME

This is CWC-86-06.

¶1. (U) Ambassador Javits recently held extensive discussions with OPCW Director General Pfirter on the prospects for the workshop on the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention to be held in Rome on October 25-27. Pfirter said he had been reflecting on the value of the conference and recounted his personal efforts to make the workshop a success. The DG had spoken to the Egyptian Foreign Minister three times in the last year, asking the Egyptian government for an invitation to visit Cairo. He had also pressed Egypt to send an official representative to the workshop, rather than an NGO representative as Egypt had done in the past workshops in Malta and Cyprus. Pfirter added that he had been reluctant to bypass the Egyptian Ambassador in The Hague in making these requests, as the Ambassador is reportedly close to the chief of cabinet of the Foreign Minister, is supportive of Egypt ultimately joining the CWC, and has been very cooperative and forthcoming. The DG recounted this in order to be clear about how much emphasis he places on official Egyptian participation in Rome.

¶2. (U) Pfirter told Javits the result has been that Egypt has decided to attend the Conference of States Parties in December as observers for the first time. However, Egypt has refused to send official representatives to Rome. The Egyptian Ambassador urged the DG to invite the NGO representative of the Egyptian Council on Foreign Relations to attend. (This would probably be the same retired general who had attended the Malta and Cyprus events.) The DG said he refused to do so, saying that he could not appear to legitimize Egypt's failure to send a high level government representative.

¶3. (U) As for Syria, the DG said that Syria no longer had an Ambassador in The Hague, but only representation in Brussels. However, the DG had met with the Syrian UN PermRep in New York and had spoken several times to the Syrian charge d'affairs in Brussels to press for an opportunity to be able to discuss this matter in Damascus, and have a high level representative in Rome. The DG was told (apparently by Italian officials) that Syria is sending officials from the Foreign and Defense Ministries. Pfirter noted that Italy had

demarched both Syria and Lebanon in capitals and had been working intensively with their ambassadors in Rome. The DG added that he had pressed the Syrian Ambassador (when he had been in The Hague) for Syrian accession to the CWC.

¶4. (U) The DG said that he had good relations with the Lebanese Ambassador in The Hague and had been working with him to get an invitation for the DG to go to Beirut. Pfirter commented that the Lebanese Ambassador had told him before the summer fighting in Lebanon that Beirut was ready to accede to the CWC. Since then he has heard nothing more on the topic. The DG said Lebanon had agreed that one of its diplomats at its Embassy in Rome would attend the workshop, but Italy and the DG are working intensively to get them to raise the level of participation. Pfirter commented that he preferred to get acceptance to attend and then try to raise the level of participation, rather than trying to garner agreement on the level of attendance from the outset. Finally, the DG said that Israel was most anxious for the workshop to proceed as they had informed the DG that they would send a strong delegation.

¶5. (U) Pfirter said he expected the Ambassadors of Israel, Syria and Lebanon to Italy would probably attend the opening ceremony of the Rome workshop and perhaps one or more might possibly stay for sidebar meetings beyond the opening event. Pfirter then commented on the suggestion that had been raised that he should intensify efforts by sending his senior staff (Deputy DG John Freeman or chief of cabinet Rafael Grossi) to capitals to press for the highest possible participation in Rome. The DG said he could not "emasculate" the Ambassadors in The Hague by not going through them to seek an invitation for a meeting in capitals. Nor could he just "parachute" his people in, as this would merely antagonize the ambassadors. The DG commented that on his trip to New York in about two

weeks, he will attempt to get meetings with the high level representatives of Syria, Egypt and Lebanon at the UN.

¶6. (U) The DG said that he had an opportunity recently to speak to Dr. Giulio Picheca, General Director of the Foreign Ministry and also head of the Italian National Authority, who is handling the workshop. Picheca said the Italian government is intent on proceeding with the workshop. Pfirter had informed the official that he had no definitive information from the U.S. on proceeding with the conference or seeking a postponement. He added that the U.S. was considering sending someone from Embassy Rome, rather than Amb. Javits. The DG said that a final decision on whether to proceed or postpone would be taken toward the end of September, after consultations with the EU, Italians, invitees, OPCW staff and others.

¶7. (U) The DG told Javits he envisioned the workshop as an opportunity to provide information about the OPCW and CWC, but, more importantly, exhort non-members to join. He said it would be unfortunate if the U.S. would send only a representative from Embassy Rome, as it would be a missed opportunity and might be taken as a weakening of support for the OPCW. The DG said that if this is the U.S. decision, he would not give anyone his impression of why the U.S. would not send its PermRep to the OPCW, but would refer people to Amb. Javits, especially as Javits had attended the Malta and Cyprus events.

¶8. (U) Malik Azhar Ellahi, head of the Government Relations and Political Affairs branch, which is making arrangements for the workshop, stated that the core program for Rome would be largely a repeat of that utilized in Malta and Cyprus. In line with the DG's statement, there will be some reduction in presentations to allow more time for side-bar discussions, although there must be enough of a program so that people who are not in these unofficial talks "do not disappear." Ellahi said there would be some other modifications. They are working to get more participants from the chemical industry. There may be a representative from the Greek government to discuss the role the OPCW had played in assisting in security preparations for the Athens Olympics.

¶9. (U) Ellahi noted that, in all candor, he was not certain as of last week whether the workshop would even happen. However, the logistical arrangements are in order. Ellahi concluded by noting that there would be a Sept. 28 consultation at which the Technical Secretariat would go over plans for the Rome workshop. At this time, it appears the plan is for a strong pitch that all participants and other SPs work to make Rome a success.

¶10. (U) Javits sends.  
ARNALL